

DISTRICT COURT (SECOND DISTRICT : WEBER COUNTY) [1687]

NATURALIZATION RECORD BOOKS, 1896-[ongoing]

7.8 cu.ft. (15 vols.) and 8 microfilm reels

DESCRIPTION: To become a citizen of the United States, an individual normally filed a "declaration of intention to become a citizen" at least two years prior to applying for citizenship. The next step was the naturalization hearing at which the candidate and witnesses either made oral statements or filed written petitions and affidavits attesting to the applicant's character, worthiness to become a citizen, and the validity of statements made to the court. If the judge found the applicant eligible to become a citizen, an oath was administered and the individual renounced his former citizenship. At this point a certificate of citizenship was issued documenting the fact. These volumes contain documentation of the final steps of becoming a United States citizen. They include petitions for naturalization, certificates of citizenship, and accompanying documentation.

The first volume contains only certificates of citizenship. Each form gives the date, applicant's name, former country and kingdom, current county of residence, and a standardized statement that the applicant had produced the necessary evidence and taken the required oaths. The judge then signed the certificate.

The 1904-1906 volume of preprinted application forms consisted of an applicant's affidavit and witness affidavits, as well as a certificate of citizenship. The applicant's affidavit gave his name; current address; occupation; birthplace, birthdate and age; port, vessel, and date of arrival; other U.S. residences; date and place of declaration of intention; and any U.S. military service. The affidavit included an oath of renunciation of allegiance to his former sovereign and a declaration that the applicant is not insane, epileptic, a pauper, begger, contagious, a felon, guilty of moral turpitude, a polygamist, anarchist, or pimp. The affidavits of two

witnesses acquainted with the applicant confirmed the applicant's statements and declared his worthiness to become a citizen. The court's order admitting the applicant as a citizen was included and a copy of a certificate of citizenship form was then completed reiterating this information. Blanks are provided for the signatures of the individual, witnesses, judge, and court clerks.

After 1906, courts were required to use pre-printed forms in volumes furnished by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization of the Department of Commerce and Labor (later the Naturalization Service of the U.S. Dept. of Labor). Each volume was to be indexed and the petitions numbered consecutively beginning with number 1 in volume 1. A duplicate copy was to be sent to the Bureau of Naturalization.

The petitions include the individual's name, residence, occupation, birthdate, and birthplace; the place from which he emigrated, the date, port of arrival, and vessel name; the date on which he declared his intention of becoming a citizen and the name of the court involved; his wife's name, birthplace, and residence; his children's names, birthdates, birthplaces, and residences; and any previous petitions filed. The applicant was also required to take an oath that he was not an anarchist or a polygamist and to renounce his former sovereign. An applicant had to be able to speak English and have resided continuously in the United States for five years and in the state for one year.

Also included on the petition form were the affidavit of two citizen witnesses who validated the individual's petition information and declared that he was of good moral character. The printed oath of allegiance and court order admitting the petitioner to citizenship are also included. Later space was added for memoranda of continuances in the proceedings, names of substitute witnesses, and space to record the denial, not just the acceptance, of the petition.

Various corroborating documents had to be produced at the time of application and hearing. These are usually bound into the volumes along with the petitions. They include declarations of intention, filed earlier in a variety of courts in several states, of the individual's desire to become a citizen. Certificates of U.S. military service may also be included, as they could be used in lieu of a declaration of intention or to shorten residency requirements. The volumes also include certificates of arrival, required of those who entered the country after 1906, from the Bureau of Naturalization showing the individual's name, date, place and manner of arrival in the United States. If the witnesses who could vouch for his length of residency lived out of state, depositions could be mailed in. The depositions, which describe how long the witness had known the applicant and confirm his moral character, were then bound in with the petition and other forms. Correspondence is sometimes included, usually from the Bureau of Naturalization, detailing changes in naturalization law and procedures. Court orders revoking citizenship are also included.

ARRANGEMENT: After 1906 entries are arranged numerically by case number in sequentially numbered volumes. From 1896-1906 arrangement is chronological.

RELATED RECORDS: DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION of Weber County residents whose naturalization papers are filed in this series comprise series 83896. A log of court actions taken in relation to these naturalization proceedings is in Series 83454, Weber County NATURALIZATION MEMORANDUM. It also acts as an index to this series.

Prior to statehood in 1896, Weber County was in different districts at different times. Declarations of intention and certificates of citizenship filed by Weber County residents before 1896 might be found in the records of any of the district courts, the Supreme Court, or the Weber County Probate court. Since Weber County was part of the 4th district just prior to statehood, part of the 2nd in 1851, part of the 1st from 1851-1859 and again from 1880-1892, and the 3rd from 1859 to 1880, records of these courts would be likely to contain citizenship papers of county residents. The researcher may want to consult the DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION for the First District Court, series 85113; the Second District Court, series 85174; the Third District Court, series 85111; and the Fourth District Court, series 85169. The last will specifically contain declarations recorded in Ogden during the period when Weber County was part of the First and Third Districts as well as the Fourth District. The CERTIFICATES OF CITIZENSHIP for the same courts in the territorial period are in series 83895, 85175, 85110, and 85170. In addition, the Supreme Court kept DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION AND CERTIFICATES OF CITIZENSHIP RECORD BOOKS, series 3942, which included first district records from 1852-1856 and third district records from 1859-1860 as well as those of the Supreme Court. More details from the naturalization hearings cited here would be in the minutes of the district court. For other possible sources consult the Research Guide to Naturalization records.

PROCESSING NOTE: Most of the series was transferred to the Archives in 1989 and scheduled by Pat Scott. Archival processing by A.C. Cone was finished the same year. Volume 1 was transferred by Pat Scott in 1994 and this inventory updated by A.C. Cone the same year. The inventory was further updated following filming in 1998.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Box	Description
1	13	Vol 1, Mar. 3, 1896-Apr. 6, 1903
1	1	Vol. 2, Jan. 4, 1904-Sept. 19, 1906
2	2	Vol. 1, #1-50, Mar. 11, 1907-Apr. 16, 1910,
2	3	Vol. 2, #51-150, Apr. 16, 1910-Feb. 10, 1914,
3	4	Vol. 3, #151-250, Feb. 14, 1914-Oct. 28, 1916,
4	5	Vol. 4, #251-350, Oct. 31, 1916-Aug. 4, 1919,
5	6	Vol. 5, #351-450, Aug. 4, 1919-Jan. 20, 1921,
5	7	Vol. 6, #451-550, Jan. 24, 1921-Sept. 22, 1922,
6	8	Vol. 7, #551-650, Sept. 12, 1922-Jan. 9, 1925,
7	9	Vol. 8, #651-750, Jan. 19, 1925-Mar. 26, 1928,
7	10	Vol. 9, #751-787, Mar. 26, 1928-June 28, 1929,
7	11	Vol. 9, #788-849, Oct. 14 1929-Apr. 15, 1933

Reel	Box	Description
8	11	Vol. 9, #858-900, July 17, 1933-Nov. 18, 1935
8	12	Vol. 9, #961-1013, Mar. 24, 1937-Dec. 8, 1937; #1121-1177, Feb. 10, 1939-Aug. 9, 1939